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AFFIDAVIT

I, Robert Sauterer, hereinafter “Affiant,” being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. Affiant, Robert Sauterer, is currently employed as a Task Force Officer with the Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”) assigned to the Cleveland District Office (“CDO”) Heroin Enforcement Group (“HEG”), and has been so since May of 2021. Prior to that, Affiant was assigned to the Cleveland Police Department as a Detective in Cleveland, Ohio. As such, Affiant is an “investigative or law enforcement officer” of the United States within the meaning of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2510(7), that is, an officer of the United States who is empowered by law to conduct investigations of and to make arrests for offenses enumerated in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2516(1).

2. Your Affiant submits this affidavit in support of a criminal complaint and arrest warrant charging Maria FUENTES with conspiring to possess with intent to distribute and distribute controlled substances, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846, 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(A), knowingly possessing with intent to distribute controlled substances, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) (b)(1)(A), on or about December 21, 2022.

BASIS OF INFORMATION

3. Except as otherwise noted, the information set forth in this Affidavit has been provided to your Affiant other law enforcement officers. Unless otherwise noted, whenever in this Affidavit your Affiant asserts that a statement was made, the information was obtained by your Affiant personally, or was provided to your Affiant by another

law enforcement officer (who may have had either direct or hearsay knowledge of the statement) to whom your Affiant has spoken, or whose report your Affiant has read and reviewed.

4. Because the Affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of obtaining a criminal complaint and securing arrest warrant for Maria FUENTES your Affiant has not included each and every fact known to him concerning this investigation. Your Affiant has set forth only the facts that he believes are necessary to establish the foundation for the issuance of the arrest warrants.

PROBABLE CAUSE

5. On December 21, 2022, on Interstate 80 (Ohio Turnpike) at approximately mile marker seventy-two and a half within the Northern District of Ohio, the Ohio State Highway Patrol conducted a traffic stop of a white 2014 GMC Sierra pick-up truck bearing Illinois License plate 3471736B was stopped for a speed violation. Maria FUENTES was identified as the driver and sole occupant of the car.

6. OSP Trooper Manly, approached the GMC and contacted FUENTES and engaged in conversation about FUENTES's travels. After the conversation with FUENTES, Trooper Manly deployed his K-9 (Boy), who conducted a sniff of the vehicle. According to Trooper Manly, K-9 Boy had a positive alert, indicating the presence of the odor of narcotics in the vehicle.

7. Trooper Manly conducted a probable cause search of the vehicle and located several items believed to be narcotics in the bed of the pick-up. These items were seized and taken into evidence. These items included a bag of suspected fentanyl pills, approximately ten pounds of suspected marijuana and approximately five kilos of suspected cocaine. A field test was conducted on one of the suspected kilos of cocaine and resulted in a presumptive positive, indicating the presence of cocaine, a Schedule II controlled substance. All suspected drugs will

be submitted to the Cuyahoga County Crime Laboratory for further testing and analysis.

8. Following the search, FUENTES was arrested, Mirandized, and interviewed. FUENTES stated she had obtained the seized drugs in Cleveland, Ohio. FUENTES stated that she believed she would be paid one thousand dollars to transport the drugs to Chicago Illinois. FUENTES admitted that she had previously been paid to convey drugs in the past.

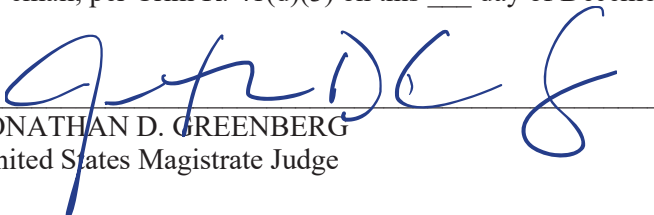
CONCLUSION

9. Based on your Affiant's training, experience, and the facts set forth in this Affidavit, and information gathered from throughout this investigation, your Affiant submits that there is probable cause to believe that on or about December 21, 2022, in the Northern District of Ohio, Maria FUENTES did knowingly conspire to possess with intent to distribute and distribute controlled substances, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846, 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(A), and knowingly possess with intent to distribute controlled substances, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(A).



Robert Sauterer
Task Force Officer
Drug Enforcement Administration

This affidavit was sworn to by the affiant by telephone after a PDF was transmitted by email, per Crim R. 41(d)(3) on this 22 day of December, 2022.



JONATHAN D. GREENBERG
United States Magistrate Judge

